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TO: USMission GENEVA

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SUBJECT: Colloquy on CTB at Senate ~~a~~ ABM Hearings

Following colloquy occurred in Friday's public hearings before Disarmament Subcommittee of Senate CFR:

"PELL: Yesterday in the Armed Services Committee it was stated that the ABM system would be developed with underground testing. Would this not mean that we must have underground testing in order to move ahead --- with Sentinel?

LAIRD: We have not had the development that the Soviets have had in this particular field, as you know. We have had development of warheads that are comparable to this at a lower megatonnage underground. But I would like Dr. Foster to direct his attention to that particular question because it is a technical question.

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DR. FOSTER: Senator Pell, we have, as you know, a vigorous underground nuclear test program, and to obtain the warheads that are ~~xpxxxfixxx~~ specified for the Sentinel, Spartan, and Sprint missiles will require a continuation of the current underground program in that regard.

PELL: Will this not mean then that if we move ahead with the program as proposed, we will have to give up hope of a complete test ban treaty?

LAIRD: No, I do not think so, Senator Pell. It depends on what time period you are talking about.

Now, a co lete test ban treaty, which Ambassador Smith is working ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ at now in these particular talks, he is maintaining the position that this country has always had in regard to the test ban, complete test ban treaty. I would hope that we co ld move forward with that treaty with proper inspection, and our

* * *

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ national position is very clear, but it does not look like this will take place in this particular time period. The Soviet Union has opposed this type of treaty, and they continue to oppose this type of treaty. So I think within the time period there is certainly the possibility of completing

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our tests. We have completed them at lower megatonnage, and we are confident that the system, as far as the warhead, will work, but in order to satisfy some doubting critics -- some feel that we should have an actual underground test of the warhead, and this will go forward so that there can be no question in the minds of anyone. I am sure that it will work from the best scientific advice that I have been able to get, and I have gone to the best nuclear scientists on this to try to find out, and they all have a great degree of confidence in this particular warhead.

PELL: Now, would you give us some idea very briefly about the time ~~xxfxxx~~ frame in which you are talking -- ~~xyxxxy~~ a year, six months, two years -- Dr. Foster?

DR. FOSTER: Senator Pell, the warhead program is phased to the deployment of the whole system. We are in the process of tests on the basic design of the nuclear components. Later we will be making tests on the full engineered design.

PELL: I wonder if you can give me your maximum overall time frame that you would require.

DR. FOSTER: I believe that it will require until 1973 when the system first reaches the phases of deployment before the warhead program will have reached a satisfactory state.

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PELL: Right.

If that is the case, and the Soviets go along with the idea, if we press them for a complete test ban treaty before ~~19xx~~ 1973, which is four years away, we will be unable to accept our own proposals in the past, and I think this is one more argument against moving with this proposal.

LAIRD: I would just like to state, Senator ~~XXXXX~~ Pell, I wish I had the degree of optimism that you possess as far as that treaty is concerned. But my concern is the maintenance of our deterrent during that period from 1973, '74, '75 and the decade of the 1970's, and this system is aimed at protecting that deterrent so that we can protect our people and maintain peace and prevent nuclear war.

I am not sure that we will have the treaty which you are talking about.

PELL: I am not confident either. I am just saying we cannot go along with this system and agree to a complete test ban treaty at the same time within four years.

LAIRD: The argument could be made, Senator Pell, too, that we should not go along with any weapons system because we are going to have an arms limitation agreement. I hope we have an

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arms limitation agreement, and I hope that it can be worked out. This is a very high priority item. But I cannot assure you, Senator Pell or any other senator or any person, that that agreement will be a reality in the very near future.

PELL: I have not said it will be a reality. I said it is the hope of many men, many women around the world that if it is, we will be caught short because we are going ahead with the program."//

Later in hearing PELL said: "We do know, as brought out this morning, that to go ahead with this system we can certainly not move ahead with a complete or comprehensive nuclear test ban until the system is installed in 1973. That, to my mind, would be one retrogressive step."

ROGERS

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